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Issue Work and Modern Actorhood in River Conversation

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ISSUE WORK AND MODERN ACTORHOOD IN RIVER CONSERVATION

Brett Crawford (bcrawford@purdue.edu)

Purdue University Library Scholars Presentation

THANK YOU

Goal as an academic: See the world the way I want to see it.



The Giving River: How organizational actorhood and history have shaped the management of water

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RESEARCH QUESTION

How has the rationality of individuals and organizations shaped and reshaped the management of natural resources over time?

TABLE 1
Contrasting *The Giving Tree* with California's McCloud River

Excerpt from <i>The Giving Tree</i>	Major Historical Events on the McCloud River
"Once there was a tree...and she loved a little boy. And every day the boy would come and he would gather her leaves... and swing from her branches and eat apples..."	During the second half of the 19th century, close to 9,000 Wintu Indians thrived along the banks of the McCloud River. Their primary food source was salmon from the river.
"Then one day the boy came to the tree ... 'I want to buy things... Can you give me some money?' 'I'm sorry,' said the tree, 'but I have no money. I have only leaves and apples. Take my apples, Boy, and sell them in the city. Then you will have money and you will be happy.' And so the boy climbed up the tree and gathered her apples and carried them away."	In 1871, President Ulysses S. Grant signed into legislation and created the United States Fish Commission. Grant, along with Spencer Baird, author of the first fishing regulations, hired Livingston Stone to go west and identify prolific salmon populations to replenish the Atlantic Salmon on the east coast that were lost from overharvesting during the Civil War. Stone found the McCloud River, created a fish hatchery and transported fish to the east coast, and later throughout the world.
"'I want a house to keep me warm,' he said... 'Can you give me a house?' 'I have no house,' said the tree. 'The forest is my house, but you may cut off my branches and build a house. Then you will be happy.' And so the boy cut off her branches and carried the away to build his house."	Shasta Dam was constructed in 1945, cutting off all tributaries used by anadromous fish to access the McCloud River to spawn. Tributaries are often referred to as branches of a river. The dam, in cutting off migratory access, instead reshaped the river into Shasta Lake, the largest water reservoir in California.
"'I want a boat that will take me far away from here. Can you give me a boat?' 'Cut down my trunk and make a boat,' said the tree. 'Then you can sail away... and be happy.' And so the boy cut down her trunk and made a boat and sailed away."	McCloud Dam was build in 1965, impeding the "trunk" of the McCloud River. The dam, operated by Pacific Gas and Electric Company is used to generate hydro-electric power and also created Lake McCloud, a second reservoir using McCloud River flows to support California's water needs.
"And after a long time the boy came back again. 'I am sorry, Boy,' said the tree, 'but I have nothing left to give you - My apples are gone... My branches are gone... My trunk is gone... I am sorry,' sighed the tree. 'I wish that I could give you something... but I have nothing left. I am just an old stump."	Nestle proposed building one of the world's largest bottling plants on the headwaters of the McCloud River in 2006. The proposal was rejected, serving as an example of a strong focus on conservation and protecting what is left of the river. Many argue that the river has nothing left to give.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Illustrates how the rationality of actors at various points in time drive their interests in specific natural resources, as well as acceptable ways to manage those resources.
2. Water resources, such as rivers, which have long been viewed as replenishing natural resources, can be managed in a way that removes their replenishing nature.

Different Ways of Seeing: Imagery and Actorhood in the Anthropocene

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“If future generations are to remember us with gratitude rather than contempt, we must leave them something more than the miracles of technology. We must leave them a glimpse of the world as it was in the beginning, not just after we got through with it.”

- Lyndon B. Johnson (36th President of the United States)





RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How has the growing rationality of the Anthropocene changed the perspectives and practices of individuals and organizations?
2. What can imagery teach us about the intersection between human society and the natural environment?

TABLE 1

Data Sources of Images

<i>Periodicals</i>	<i>Magazine Type/Group</i>	<i>Sample Size</i>
1 American Angler (1978-2016)	US Domestic For Profit	174
2 Eastern Fly Fishing (2005-2016)	US Domestic For Profit	29
3 Fly Fisherman (1969-2016)	US Domestic For Profit	277
4 Fly Rod & Reel (1980-2016)	US Domestic For Profit	237
5 Flyfishing & Tying Journal (1982-2016)	US Domestic For Profit	144
6 Flyfishing the West (1978-1981)	US Domestic For Profit	22
7 Irish Angler (1999-2016)	International	182
8 LL Bean (1928-1991)	Corporate Sales Catalog	31
9 Northwest Flyfishing (2000-2016)	US Domestic For Profit	46
10 Salmon Trout Steelheader (1967-2007)	US Domestic For Profit	255
11 The American Fly Fisher (1977-2016)	US Domestic For Profit	126
12 The Flyfisher (1968-2016)	US Domestic Env Assoc	167
13 The Salmon and Trout Magazine (1978-1991)	International	29
14 Trout (1963-216)	US Domestic Env Assoc	181
15 Western Fly Fishing	US Domestic For Profit	7
16 Other	Spans all groups	23
<i>Total</i>		<i>1930</i>
 <i>Archival Special Collections</i>		
17 Nick Lyons ephemera collection, 1932 – 2005		88
18 Datus C. Proper papers, 1864 – 2003		128
19 Bud Lilly papers, 1926 – 2008		134
20 Bud Lilly papers, 1946 – 2003		76
21 Nick Lyons ephemera collection addendum, 1824 - 2013		8
22 Joan Wulff papers, 1944 – 2014		38
23 Sylvester Nemes papers, 1973 – 2010		142
<i>Total</i>		<i>614</i>

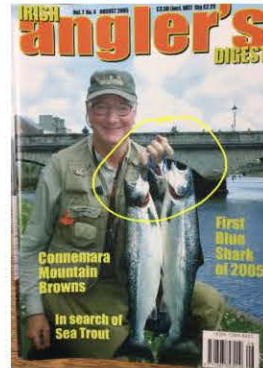
APPENDIX 2

Examples of Cover Images by First-Order Concept

Creel



Stringer



Spear



Barbed hook



Tail hold



Gill hold



Grip n' grin



Keep 'em wet



River landscape > 50%



TABLE 2

Coding Scheme for Periodicals			
<i>First Order Codes</i>	<i>Definition of Code</i>	<i>Counts</i>	<i>Second Order Themes</i>
magazine title	name of publication	1,930	general information
year of publication	year of the published issue	1,930	
landscape > 50%	river landscape represented more than 50% of the image	502	cover emphasis
angler > 50%	angler represented more than 50% of the image	952	
other	image portrayed content other than a river landscape or angler	476	
discourse: fishing technique	cover text signaled content on technique	969	discourse
discourse: fishing location	cover text signaled content on location	947	
discourse: conservation	cover text signaled content on conservation	204	
discourse: catch-and-release	cover text signaled content on catch-and-release practices	23	
creel	small wicker basket used to hold fish	98	death to environment
stringer	string or rope threaded through the fish's mouth and out the gills	70	
spear	barbed pole used to penetrate a	11	
dead fish pictured	fish is no longer living	275	
barbed hook	fishing hook has a barb	91	
hand in gill	fish is held up with a hand in the gills	155	
tail hold	fish is held up with a grip around the	19	
grip 'n grin	fish is held under its body and out of the water, hands are not in the gills	386	conservation and stewardship
keep 'em wet	fish is held in the water, hands are not in the gills	163	
angler present	angler appears in the image	1498	angler and gender
angler not present	angler does not appear in the image	432	
fish not present	no fish present	706	
away from river	image is taken away from the river	121	
angler: male	angler gender is male	1269	
angler: female	angler gender is female	169	
angler: unknown	gender of angler is indecipherable	60	

FIGURE 1

Historical Emergence of Trout Unlimited Chapters by Decade

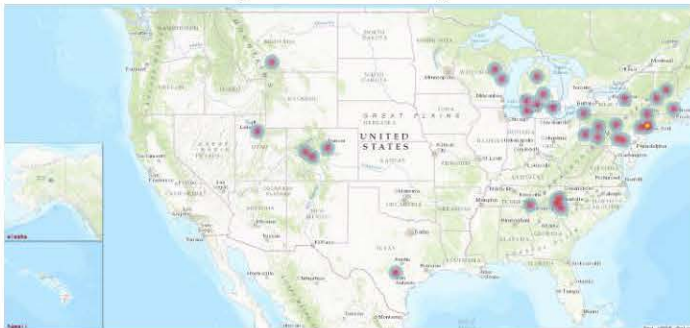
33 chapters founded by 1969



463 chapters founded by 1999



159 chapters founded by 1979



505 chapters founded by 2009



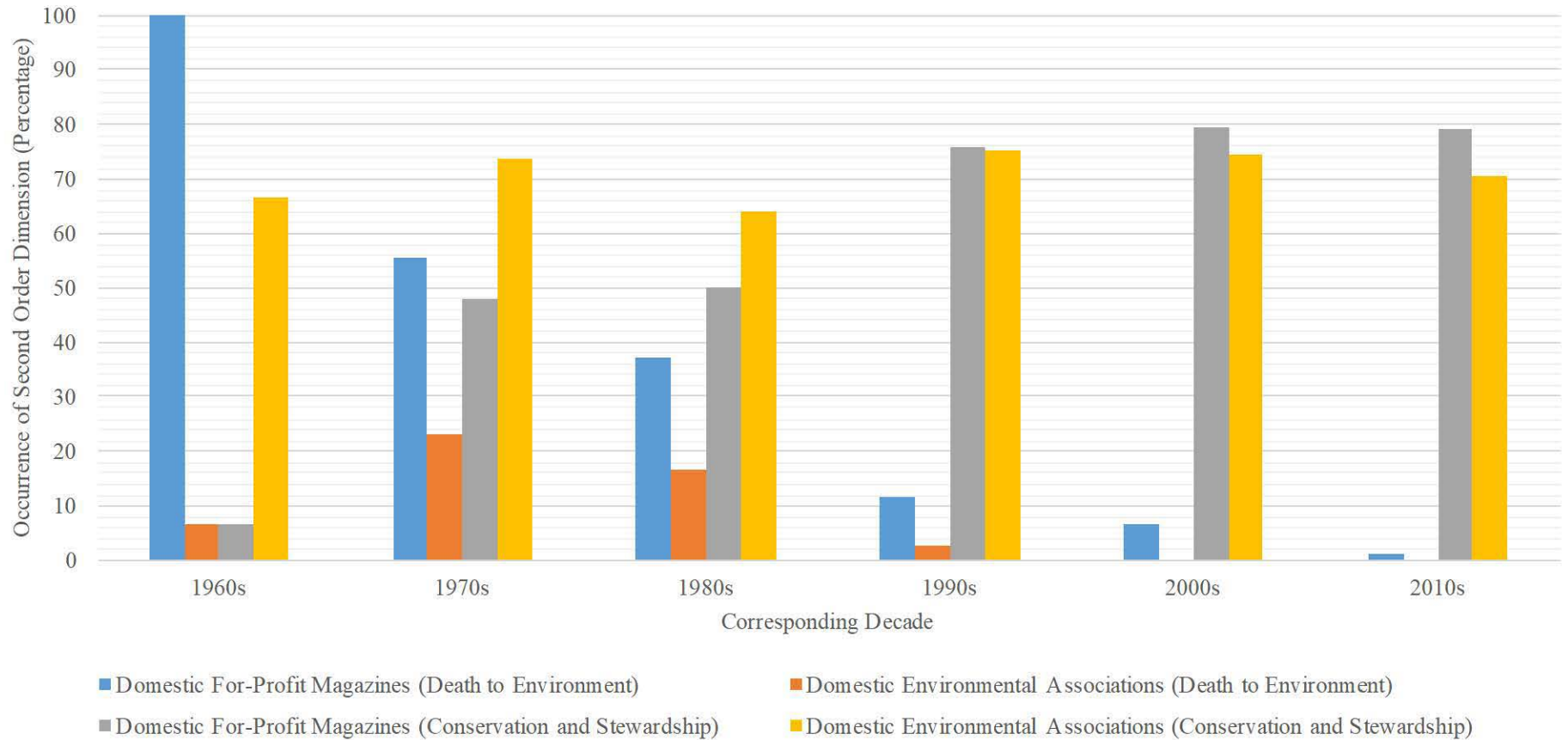
357 chapters founded by 1989



523 chapters founded by 2015

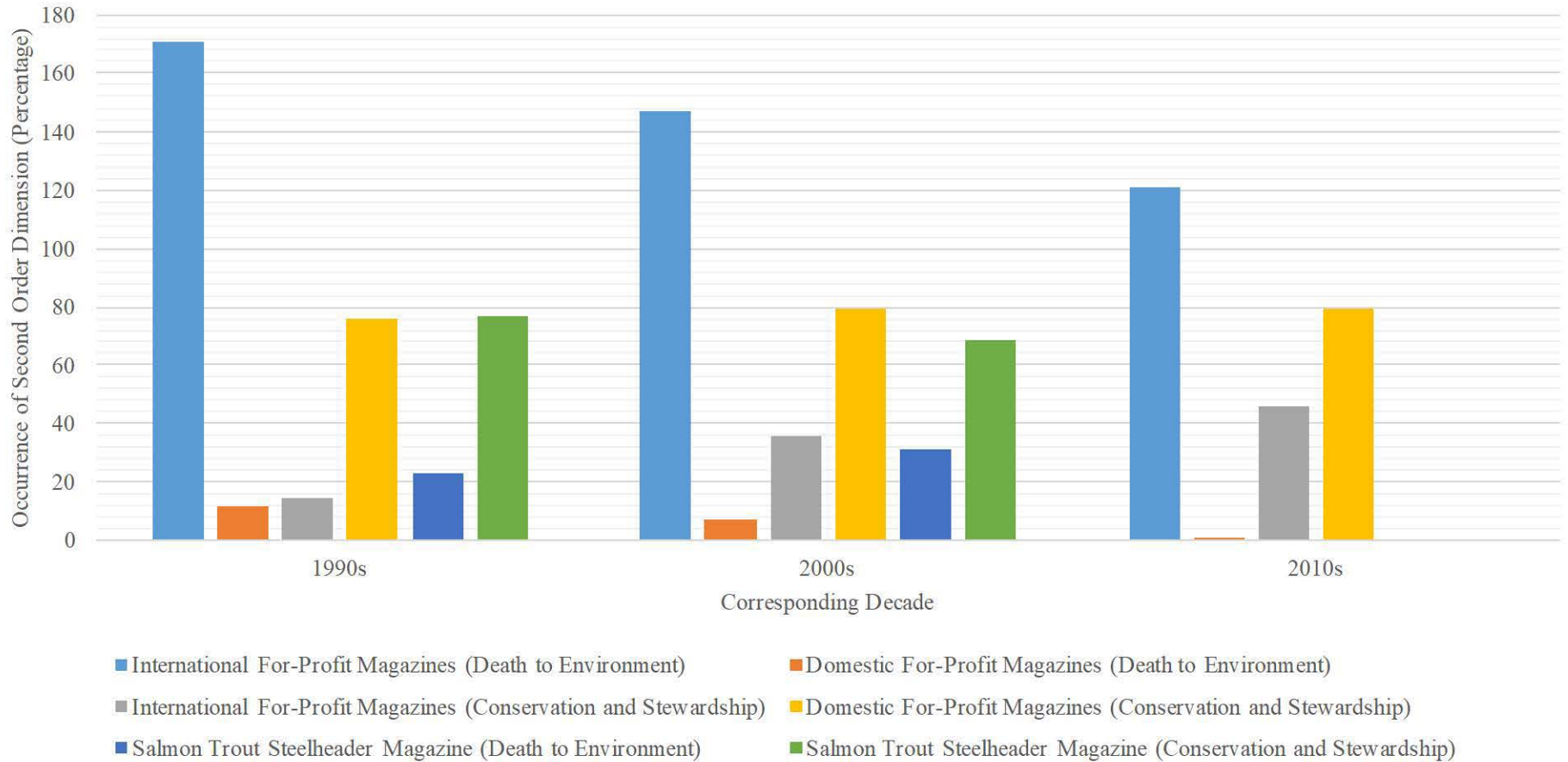


FIGURE 2
Historical Trends in the Appearance of Death and Conservation Second-Order Dimensions



Note: Since 2000, not one of the 111 cover images in our sample from domestic environmental associations included an artifact or action linked to death, while 22 of 467 domestic for-profit magazines included were coded with a first-order concept linked to harvesting. Moreover, if Salmon Trout Steelheader Magazine is removed from the domestic for-profit sample due to its emphasis on fishing for anadromous fish populations, only 2 of the 413 remaining cover images were coded under the second-order dimension “Death to Environment.”

FIGURE 3
Historical Trends Comparing Domestic and International Magazine Cover Images



We separated out Salmon Trout Steelheader Magazine from our domestic sample to compare trends between cover images emphasizing anadromous fish in both domestic and international magazines.

APPENDIX 1

Stream Side Signage Exemplars



Burttons Landing Access, Au Sable River, Michigan (not far from Trout Unlimited founding location). The sign communicates that it is illegal to harvest trout, a regulation managed by the Department of Natural Resources.



Truckee River, California. The sign reads "barbless flies." Interestingly, the private property is protected by barbed wire on the perimeter to help keep non-members off the property. The property is owned by the San Francisco Fly Casting Club.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. We contribute to the organizations literature examining the Anthropocene by showing organizational efforts to replace consumption with alternatives that view nature as equal to humanity, which can challenge the foundations of capitalism as a means to better preserve our planet. Water resources, such as rivers, which have long been viewed as replenishing natural resources, can be managed in a way that removes their replenishing nature.
2. We also demonstrate that pointing the camera at organizational practices themselves, in contrast to imagery portraying environmental degradation, allows us to better explore the intersection between human society and the natural environment, given that images function as historical containers for preserving aesthetic meanings emblematic of various points in history.